

Writing an Introductory Paragraph for your Social Studies/Language Arts Research Paper

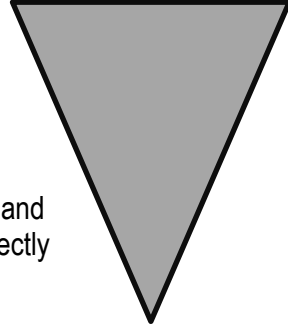
“BASIC” MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS:

- ✓ should have an “attention getter”—something that immediately catches or engages your reader’s attention (you want them to keep reading, don’t you?)
- ✓ **NEVER** directly states, “I’M GOING TO TALK ABOUT...”
- ✓ must be at least 5-7 sentences.
- ✓ must introduce your paper’s main focus (the person, the place or the era you researched).
- ✓ must provide any necessary “background knowledge” readers will need to know to better understand your specific subtopics your paper will discuss later.
- ✓ must end with a thesis statement.

Where- How do I begin?

Think of your introductory paragraph as an inverted (upside down) pyramid like the picture to the right. →
Start with the widest part of your paper’s focus, *i.e.* the most broad, general information about it.

As you get closer to the “tip” of the pyramid (closer to the last sentence), your information should get more and more specific. The very “tip” will be the narrowest information—that will be your thesis statement, which directly introduces the three subtopics of your paper’s body.



Your introduction paragraph should answer or discuss the following questions:

1. (What is the most exciting or interesting fact, statistic or quote you came across in your paper?)
Use this as your “ATTENTION GETTER” (your first sentence!)
 - a. **Example:** “Did you know that...?”
- (What “focus topic” did you choose?)
 - b. NOTE: Your first sentence of your paper should include the name of your person/place/era.
2. Why did you choose this focus topic?
 - a. **Example:** “I chose to research this topic because.... and” ← Explain!
3. Before you researched this person/place/era, what did you know about this topic?
 - a. **Example:** “Before researching, I only knew Michelangelo as a Ninja Turtle. I didn’t realize he was an Italian Renaissance man.”
4. Why is this person/place/era important to history? (The answer to this is your THESIS STATEMENT.)
 - a. **Example:** Michelangelo was an important artist during the Italian Renaissance time period because of his/her active early life, spectacular life achievements, and lasting impact after death. **Note! This thesis example was written by following the thesis “formula” for a person.*

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH – ROUGH DRAFT RUBRIC

*Each paragraph will be submitted separately.

Name: _____

This rough draft is for my:

☐

Introduction Paragraph

		Points Possible	Earned
Format:	The paper is typed, in Times New Roman, 12 point font	0.5	
	Paragraph is indented no more than one “tab-button” space. (You should NOT have used the space bar to get the paper to indent; find “tab” on the left side of your keyboard and use that to indent.)	0.5	
	Proper headING in upper left hand corner (your name, teacher’s name, class + period, date due)	0.5	
	Proper headER in upper right hand corner (student’s last name + page number). (You should NOT have manually typed in the page number; you need to use the “header/footer” tool under Word’s “Insert” tab.)	0.5	
	Text is evenly double-spaced throughout the entire paper.	0.5	
	Contains minimum amount of required sentences. (Introduction and conclusion should have minimum of 5-7 sentences each.)	0.5	
Spelling & Punctuation:	There are less than 2 spelling errors in the entire paragraph.	0.5	
	There are less than 2 punctuation errors in the entire paragraph.	0.5	
	<i>**More than 2 errors in either of these areas will highly detract from overall quality of your paper. They may affect the reader’s reading experience by making it difficult to understand, or frustrating to stop and figure it out. You should be able to catch most (if not all) of your own spelling and punctuation errors by using Microsoft Word Processor’s tools (paying attention to the red and green squiggly lines that appear when you’re typing) and also by using your peer editor for assistance.</i>		
Grammar and Sentencing:	All sentences are complete (no fragments).	0.5	
	Sentences were grade-appropriate, incorporating a mixture of simple and complex sentencing.	0.5	
	There is no awkward wording or unclear meanings throughout the paragraph.	0.5	
Introduction only:	A title has been added, centered to the page, and appears after the heading but before the intro paragraph. It follows proper formatting (see above) and is original and exciting.	0.5	
	Paragraph begins with an appropriate attention-getting “Hook” to entice the reader’s interest, then effectively and smoothly transitions from the hook into the focus and topic of the paper.	0.5	
	Some light background information was introduced about the era discussed in the paper, without revealing any details that will be repeated later.	0.5	
	A thesis sentence identified the paper’s topic in focus (the specific person, place or era) and the three subtopics that are discussed throughout the paper.	0.5	
Submission:	*Original draft (handwritten or typed) of this section is stapled on the backside of typed rough draft. Editing marks can be seen on the original draft and corrections appeared to have been made to the typed version before submission for a grade.	0.5	
	Submitted late?	-4 pts	
Total:		8	